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THE CHALLENGES OF TERMINOLOGY IN SUBTITLING DOCUMENTARIES: THE CASE OF THE E-LEARNING FROM NATURE PROJECT.

The project “E-Learning from Nature” (ref. no. 2015-1-IT02-KA201-015133) was sponsored by the European Commission, under the Erasmus+ Programme, KA2 Strategic Partnership in the Field of School Education. It aimed at “promoting a proactive students’ approach to scientific subjects learning”, as well as “propos[ing] innovative teaching methodologies to scientific teachers” (cf. official website). As a result of this project, the Portuguese stakeholder, represented by the Polytechnic of Bragança, produced an array of 25 short videos that intended to vulgarise scientific knowledge for children and teenagers, particularly in the areas of mathematics, biology, zoology and botany. These were to be subtitled into English, a task that was undertaken by four different students from our institution’s master in Translation and later revised by a professor of Translation Studies. Not only was the level of English remarkably diverse among these students, but also their terminology was often disparate, even when translating within the same conceptual area.

Our intention with this paper is to assess the development of this process, focusing on the following: workflow management, terminology standardising, meeting the subtitling standards and the final outcome. With this analytical exercise, we seek to improve practices for future projects and draw a set of recommendations that balance the relation between Translation and Terminology.